

## Reducing Stress

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Stress is unavoidable. That doesn't mean you should pretend it doesn't exist. You can learn to keep everyday stress under control by focusing on your mind, and your body.

- **Mindfulness.** You can take yourself out of the pressures of daily life for a temporary break by slowing down. Pay attention to the present moment, without worrying about the future, what's fair, what's good or bad, and so on. Walk a little more slowly to work, listening to your body for signs of tension. Take a few slow, deep breaths as you wait for the elevator, or sit at your desk waiting for Web pages to load. Focus on what your body is telling you, and you'll be able to manage its responses to pressure more effectively instead of allowing stress to control you.

- **Physical exercise.** Activity focuses your energy outward. Exercise also strengthens your immune system. A vigorous walk at lunch can do wonders for your stress levels. A regular workout – swimming, bike riding, weight training – can help you manage stress better over the long term. Don't forget low-impact techniques such as yoga, tai chi, and other stress relievers that emphasize stretching and reducing muscle tension.

Whether it's mindfulness, physical activity, or some other form of stress management, take action and do something to improve your mental health this month!